

Battling Chesham Made Wycombe Fight Hard For Cup Win

by Argus

Chesham United 1,
Wycombe Wanderers 2

CONFINE swans to the village duck pond and they would look something like Wycombe Wanderers did at Aylesbury Sports Stadium on Saturday. The Isthmian leaders had to forget fanciful footballing notions on a muddy, sticky morass resembling a tank training course, and battle grimly, on the defensive for most of the second half, to beat crude-but-ferocious Chesham United.

Wycombe class counted for nothing in this Berks and Bucks Cup semi-final game and those Chesham United fans who were baying for the Wanderers' blood before the teams had even kicked off, probably had a point when they bemoaned Chesham United's ill-starred luck.

United, a mere goal down at the break, battered and belted away almost continually until it seemed the Wycombe defence would capitulate through sheer fatigue. Desperately narrow escapes and some bad shooting gaffs by the excitable Chesham forwards enabled the Wanderers to ride out the storm and when Paul Bates nodded a classical second goal in the 75th minute, Wycombe were safe.

It took Chesham until the 89th minute before they eventually found the net.

SABOTAGED

The atrocious conditions and Chesham's fast tackling sabotaged Wycombe's chances of playing pure soccer. When they did strike something like their normal attacking power—in the final 20 minutes—the Corinthians were put emphatically in their place.

With precious grass under his boots, Worley flickered past full-back Lewis, a dogged young man who had been pounding him off the ball for most of the game, and as he did so the forwards sprang to new life.

Most consistent of the Wycombe attackers was Paul Bates, roaming astutely through the midfield regions and always chivvying the Chesham defence. Cliff Trott got through a fantastic amount of work—United were never able to quench his spirit for the fight—but Peter James was bogged down by "shadow" centre-half Dave Bradshaw his inseparable companion.

HARD SLOG

Wycombe's defenders had a hard slogging game—none more so than wing halves Jimmy Truett and Ron Fryer, who were constantly in action. So was long John Fisher, but he was not entirely happy coping with towering Geoff Cornes, Chesham's long-legged centre-forward.

There were grim memories of last season's Berks and Bucks campaign — when Michael Rockell broke a leg—as Len Worley tumbled in a tackle was carried injured off the field. Ten-men Wycombe buckled in well, Bates and Trott being particularly active in attack.

Over-enthusiasm and poor distribution wrecked many Chesham moves and, throughout, Wanderers were the more unruffled and accurate side.

JAMES SCORES

But Chesham had their chances . . . particularly when Cornes tricked Fisher on a right-wing dash, but centred tamely instead of shooting from the angle. Syrett's knees were also to save Wycombe before half-time.

In the hub-bub of Chesham cheering and shouting Wanderers kept their heads and rattled United with a smart 26th minute goal. Trott steered the ball through the mud to James and the centre-forward shot, past the diving Jimmy Morris.

Chesham outside-left Hornsey baffled himself and his teammates by boobing a simple chance as soon as the second half started and this mistake seemed to hang like a spectre over Chesham for the rest of the match.

The pay-off goal was a beauty. Trott put Worley through and the winger tricked Lewis delightfully before squaring the ball on to Bates's head. A nonchalant header left goalkeeper Morris groping.

Gilmour headed a last-minute goal for Chesham, but after Bates had made the score 2-0 to Wycombe, Wanderers were never in danger of being caught. This cup win, in teeth of determined flat-out opposition by a plucky, lively team, was earned the hard way.